

Please do not mandate the use of the broadcast flag. Under the current television system, I have the ability to record my favorite program if I am away from my house for the evening, and watch it later. If the broadcast flag in HDTV is required, I will be forced to miss my favorite program if I'm away for the evening, since I will not be permitted to record it.

Contrary to what the movie industry would have you believe, most consumers do not record programs off the television and upload them to the Internet or sell them on the streetcorner. Most consumers tape programs off the television to watch them at a later date, because they have other things to do when the show is aired. Removing this ability will only slow the adoption of HDTV, and increase consumer frustration.

I fail to see why millions of law-abiding consumers should be punished merely because the movie industry is afraid of what a few criminals might do with TV broadcasts. If you want to punish the criminals, get police to crackdown on people selling bootleg recordings on the streetcorner. I saw no less than 5 people doing this on a 2 day trip to New York City. But only punish the people breaking the law. Don't punish the innocent.

Also, I'm sure someone at the FCC will recall the fight put-up by the media companies when the home video cassette recorder came out.

They claimed it would ruin them, they claimed no one would see movies anymore, and that shortly after the introduction of the VCR, there would be no new movies anymore, because there would be no one to watch them. Clearly they were wrong, as movie theaters are bigger and more numerous than ever. This is yet another example of the media companies seeing new technology as an enemy, instead of a new way of reaching consumers.

If a murder was roaming around suburbia killing people with a tire-iron, would the police confiscate every tire-iron in the neighborhood and proclaim that the murdering spree was over? Of course not. So why should the media companies confiscate the fair-use rights of every consumers and claim that the piracy problem will be solved?